

**Remarks/Arguments:**

Claims 1-17 are presently pending in this application, with claims 1-9 having been withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 10-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,743,289 to Mickus et al ("Mickus") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,557,873 to Lynam et al. ("Lynam"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 10 recites, *inter alia*, a poultry litter fertilizer manufacturing system comprising a raw material ventilation system, a dryer system, and a pelleting system. The ventilation system comprises a filter and a scrubber for treating air by removing dust and odor produced from raw material from the air prior to drying the raw material. The dryer system is connected to the ventilation system to receive the ventilated raw material for pasteurizing the raw material comprising poultry litter, drying the pasteurized material to form a dry material, and reducing the dried material to a powder. The dryer system is structurally ordered in the manufacturing system so as to receive the raw material after the raw material is treated by the raw material ventilation system. The pelleting system produces granular and homogenized pellets *from the powder*.

Mickus, on the other hand, discloses a granulator 3 from which granular material flows to dryer 19. Col. 5, lines 61-62. The dried granular material then flows from dryer 19 to cooler 26. Col. 6, lines 4-7. Granular material from cooler 26 flows to screen deck 31. Col. 6, lines 13-14. Oversized material from screen deck 31 flows to crusher 33, where the oversized material is partially crushed. Col. 6, lines 16-18. Product from screen deck 31 flows to diverter device 38. Col. 6, lined 22-23. Product is then withdrawn to storage via line 40. Col. 6, lines 28-29. Mickus fails to disclose or suggest a *pelleting system for producing pellets from powder*.

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 10 is improper and requests reconsideration and allowance. Claims 11-17 all depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 10, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11-17 are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 10.

Notwithstanding the arguments presented above with respect to claim 10, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is also patentable over the cited prior art for at least the

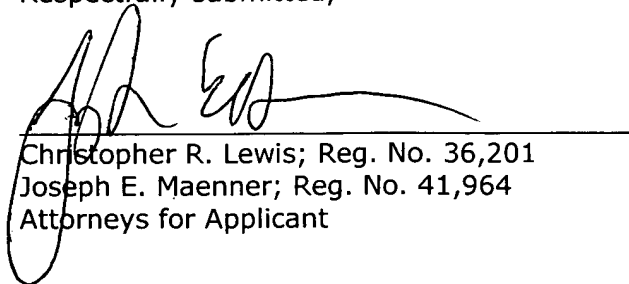
additional fact that Mickus fails to disclose or suggest the limitation of a finish area ventilation system for cooling and storing the pellets as recited in claim 14.

The Office Action states that Mickus further discloses "a finishing area ventilation system for cooling and storing the pellets (26, 29; col.6, lines 1-13)." Applicant respectfully traverses this statement. Mickus discloses cooler 26 connected to bag-house dust collector 28 via line 27. Mickus, however, fails to disclose cooler 26 being a storage area. Mickus does disclose withdrawing product from diverter 38 to storage via line 40. Col. 6, lines 24-29. A storage area is inferred to be downstream of line 40. Mickus does not disclose or suggest any ventilation system downstream of line 40. Applicant respectfully submits that Mickus neither discloses nor suggests a finish area ventilation system for cooling *and storing the pellets*, as is recited by claim 14.

**Conclusion**

Based on the arguments above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10-17 are patentable over the cited prior art. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 10-17 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher R. Lewis; Reg. No. 36,201  
Joseph E. Maenner; Reg. No. 41,964  
Attorneys for Applicant

CRL/JEM/

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☒ P.O. Box 980  
Valley Forge, PA 19482  
(610) 407-0700

☐ P.O. Box 1596  
Wilmington, DE 19899  
(302) 778-2500

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